

Mr. KUCINICH. Then I yield 30 seconds to my friend from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN).

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is afraid that because at an anti-Zionism "World without Zionism" conference, Ahmadinejad said, "Wipe Israel off the map." We are quibbling over whether he said on another occasion, wipe the Israel regime, Zionist regime off the map and on a third occasion said, the world would soon see the destruction of Israel. The gentleman thinks there is ambiguity there.

This is a regime in Iran sending troops and equipment, killing our soldiers in Iraq, building nuclear weapons, threatening to kill our number one ally, the State of Israel, and he doesn't want the U.N. to look into it to condemn them? I think the gentleman is wrong.

Mr. KUCINICH. If, in fact, that's what he said, then of course the U.N. should look into it. But I think we should look into whether or not he said that. And again, I offered to submit, but was denied a unanimous consent, the text of his speech, and a translation by Nazila Fathi in the New York Times Tehran Bureau of the speech. This is from the New York Times. And they certainly have never been accused of any kind of propaganda against Israel.

So I would say that it is important for us to look at this. And I don't think it is an unreasonable request that we should look at exactly what this person said so we will know what the appropriate course of action is to take.

I stand for peace. I stood before this Congress and challenged the war against Iraq when very few people were willing to do that because I questioned whether or not Iraq did have weapons of mass destruction. I am questioning whether or not this person is trying to destroy Israel. If he is, then I certainly support my friend's concerns.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of today's resolution which calls for the United Nations to take action to uphold one of its most important conventions—the Convention of Genocide. With the violence of the Holocaust just a few years behind them, the members of the United Nations in 1948 established a convention to prevent such atrocities from ever happening again.

There is much talk at the UN about preventing war and genocide but unfortunately there is little action. The Iranian President has called for a UN member nation to be "wiped off the map." Do we have any doubt that the UN would sanction the Israeli Prime Minister if the positions were reversed?

The Iranian president and the Ayatollahs' supreme wish is the destruction of Israel and all her people. They have not tried to mask this goal—they doubt the holocaust of the past and make plans for a holocaust of the future.

Ahmadinejad has even gone as far as speculating that the collateral damage of attacking Israel with nuclear weapons would be worth the cost to the Muslim world. For a regime that is developing nuclear capabilities, these are truly dangerous words. In the 1930's fas-

cist dictators made bold claims of impending violence and we ignored them to our own peril.

The world should not ignore these words of aggression. Today, we call on UN member nations to call out Ahmadinejad, to condemn these statements, and to work together to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 21, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JACOB BIRNBAUM

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 137) honoring the life and six decades of public service of Jacob Birnbaum and especially his commitment freeing Soviet Jews from religious, cultural, and communal extinction, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 137

Whereas Jacob Birnbaum was born on December 10, 1926, and December 10 is International Human Rights Day;

Whereas Birnbaum performed relief work with victims of Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism from 1946 through 1951, then worked with the disintegrating Jewish communities of North Africa in the mid-1950s and early 1960s;

Whereas, in 1964, Birnbaum moved to New York and founded the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (SSSJ) on April 27 of that year;

Whereas four days later Birnbaum organized approximately 1,000 students who marched for four hours in front of the Mission to the United Nations of the Soviet Union on May 1, 1964, to begin the direct action public struggle for Soviet Jewry;

Whereas the SSSJ utilized nonviolent methods, including marches, rallies, publication of extensive educational materials, and meetings with government officials, to organize and activate students to take direct action in the cause of freeing Soviet Jews trapped behind the Iron Curtain, utilizing the slogan "Let My People Go";

Whereas, on April 4, 1965, Birnbaum organized the Jericho March, in which students encircled the Soviet Mission and sounded shofars from all around the building and proceeded to rally at the United Nations;

Whereas, on April 12, 1965, petitions were presented at the United Nations's Isaiah Wall;

Whereas Birnbaum organized a Jericho Ride to Washington, DC, on May 20, 1965, where he and the first SSSJ chairman Rabbi Shlomo Riskin met with senior Soviet diplomat Anatoly Myshkov, and thereafter the

students circled the Embassy of the Soviet Union to the sound of shofars, then moved on to the Department of State for a vigorous discussion, and finally arrived in Lafayette Park in front of the White House for a rally addressed by Members of Congress and the reading of an Appeal to Conscience;

Whereas Birnbaum and his student steering committee organized approximately thirty events in SSSJ's first two years to awaken the Jewish community in New York and beyond to the plight of Soviet Jews;

Whereas Birnbaum's important New York marches and rallies in the 1960s were the instrumental precursors of the great Solidarity events of the 1970s organized by the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry under the direction of Malcolm Hoenlein, the founding director;

Whereas Birnbaum has testified before committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate and the Helsinki Commission;

Whereas Birnbaum advocated utilizing economic leverage at a Congressional hearing as early as May 1965;

Whereas Birnbaum worked closely in the early 1970s with Senator Henry Jackson, who introduced legislation linking United States trade benefits and capital flow to the Soviet Union with increased Soviet emigration;

Whereas Birnbaum was one of the most persistent of those individuals who fought for passage of the Jackson-Vanik amendment to allow Soviet Jews and other East European Jews to escape oppression and religious, cultural, and communal extinction in the Soviet bloc;

Whereas Birnbaum conducted a number of campaigns with Presidents and Congress for the protection of Soviet Jewish underground self-education groups and organized a delegation of the Synagogue Council of America to meet with the Deputy Secretary of State in 1985;

Whereas Birnbaum received the Prophet in Our Time Award in 1974 on the tenth anniversary of the SSSJ;

Whereas Birnbaum received the Yeshiva University Community Service Award in 1988 and the Freedom Award in 2004 from the Manhattan Beach Jewish Center;

Whereas Birnbaum was honored in 2004 by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations on the 40th anniversary of the initiation of the Soviet Jewry movement;

Whereas during the 1990s Birnbaum was engaged in a number of interventions in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, especially Uzbekistan; and

Whereas Birnbaum continues to assist institutions for the Jewish education of former Soviet Jews as part of his "Let My People Know" campaign: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives honors the life and six decades of public service of Jacob Birnbaum and especially his commitment to freeing Soviet Jews from religious, cultural, and communal extinction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I would first like to commend our distinguished colleague, Mr. NADLER of New York, for introducing this resolution. The resolution before the House honors one man, but it also honors all that he symbolizes in the name of human rights and freedom of worship.

Before the Holocaust, the Jewish population of the Soviet Union numbered 5 million. After the war, only 2 million remained. The pain of these Holocaust survivors was compounded. They became the targets of a ruthless and systematic campaign to strip them of their communal rights and Jewish identity.

This resolution pays tribute to a remarkable man who stood up for these victims of brutality. Jacob Birnbaum launched an effort, which turned into a groundswell, to protest the Soviet Union's abhorrent efforts to extinguish the religious, cultural and communal identity of the Jewish people.

His movement began in 1964 as a humble yet bold student group organized to march on the Soviet Union to the United Nations. Over the years, the group conducted rallies in New York and Washington, circulated petitions, and used every possible means to keep world attention on the plight of the Soviet Jews. This social activism snowballed into the solidarity marches of the 1970s that gathered millions of individuals to fight for the cause.

Birnbaum also worked with the authors of the historic Jackson-Vanik amendment to help free Soviet Jews looking to emigrate. In this way, he helped to elevate the movement so that the U.S. Federal Government had to pay attention and to act. But his dogged and determined work continued, even as the Soviet bloc crumbled and anti-Semitism flared in incidents across the region. Mr. Birnbaum continues to work with educational institutions for former Jews as part of the "Let My People Know" campaign.

Through the years, Jacob Birnbaum has received numerous honors for his services to mankind. He deserves this further accolade on behalf of a grateful Congress for engaging so energetically in a cause that we have long supported, helping to free Soviet Jews from oppression and to help them thrive.

To Jews in Russia and the former Soviet Republic, the name Jacob Birnbaum refers not only to one dedicated man but to the very cause of freedom itself.

I support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Mr. NADLER's resolution, House Resolution 137, honoring the life and public service of Jacob Birnbaum and especially his commitment to freeing Soviet Jews from religious, cultural and communal extinction.

For decades, Mr. Birnbaum has been at the forefront of the nonviolent struggle for Soviet Jewry, establishing the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, and organizing marches, rallies and publication of educational materials aimed at freeing Jews trapped in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Birnbaum worked closely with Members of the United States Congress, testified at congressional hearings and consistently pushed for the United States to use our economic leverage against the Soviet Union to pressure that country so they could allow Soviet Jews and other East European Jews to escape the oppression of a religious and cultural nature in the Soviet Union. Throughout the decades, Mr. Birnbaum's persistence and commitment to human rights and religious freedom have been invaluable in freeing Soviet Jews and preserving their religious and cultural heritage.

Mr. Birnbaum's commitment to this cause has not diminished to this day. He continues to help Jewish educational institutions and former Soviet Jews even today. And Mr. NADLER's resolution before us honors Mr. Birnbaum and his years of public service. I urge Members to support this important resolution.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. I thank the gentlelady for her support, and I thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for her support.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 137, a resolution to honor the life and six decades of public service of Jacob Birnbaum, known more familiarly as Jacob Birnbaum, especially his commitment freeing Soviet Jews from religious, cultural and communal extinction.

It is fitting that Jacob Birnbaum was born on December 10, which is also International Human Rights Day. This past December, Mr. Birnbaum celebrated his 80th birthday. It is time for this body to honor the life and work, the 60 years of public service of this remarkable human rights activist. I am very proud to call him a fellow New Yorker.

Jacob Birnbaum was born in Germany, and during World War II, his family fled the Nazis and settled in the United Kingdom. Throughout the war, the Birnbaum family knew the plight of Jews, especially their own relatives, under the Nazis. His personal experience with the horrors of evil sparked the activism of Jacob Birnbaum.

Beginning in 1946, following the end of the war, 19-year-old Jacob Birnbaum

devoted several years to providing relief for younger survivors of the Nazi and Soviet totalitarian systems. Through his work with young Polish Jews who managed to leave the USSR after the war, he became familiar with the iniquities of the Soviet system. These earlier experiences fueled his later passion to mobilize American Jewry in the drive to rescue Jews from oppression in the Soviet Union.

In the mid 1950s and early 1960s, he became involved in assisting people from the disintegrating Jewish communities of North Africa caught up in the struggles of the host countries for independence from France and in the persecution of the Jews of North Africa after the independence of Israel.

His activism did not end then. After traveling to the United States, he decided to create a national student organization to activate the grass roots of the American Jewish community. Settling in New York, in 1964, he set up his first student committee. Then he concentrated on building a student core at Yeshiva University. Mr. Birnbaum named the new organization the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, known familiarly as the SSSJ.

Finally, he called a national founding meeting at Columbia University on April 27, 1964, followed by a large student demonstration 4 days later on the Soviet holiday May Day in front of the Soviet United Nations Mission. The authoritative Center for Jewish History has listed the demonstration as the beginning of the public struggle for the freedom of Soviet Jews.

Many consider this action as the reason to consider Mr. Birnbaum the father of the movement to liberate Soviet Jewry. Indeed, the evidence supports this notion. Throughout the rest of the 1960s, under his direction, the Student Struggle continued working full time in response to the oppression of Soviet Jews.

As we know, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia led to the imprisonment of Soviet Jews behind the Iron Curtain. Jewish culture, Jewish religion and Jewish communal life were forcibly extinguished under the Soviet regime, which also indulged in numerous anti-Semitic actions.

Even after Stalin's death, the Soviet kingdom of fear abated only slightly. The Cold War effectively continued to cut off the Jews of Russia and Eastern Europe from their fellow Jews in the West, and almost all expressions of Jewish religion and culture continued to be prohibited.

Nevertheless, expressions of outrage began to accumulate in the early 1960s, with a few pioneers leading the way. Shortly after the initial organizing by Jacob Birnbaum, the major Jewish organizations met in Washington, D.C., and established the American Conference on Soviet Jewry. The SSSJ that Mr. Birnbaum had established functioned as its handbook said, to mobilize a tidal wave of public opinion.

After the mass arrests of young Jewish dissidents on June 15, 1970, and the

death sentences handed down to them in the Leningrad trial of December 1970, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry was created.

□ 1700

The Greater New York Conference, under the direction of the then young activist Malcolm Hoenlein, initiated the profoundly important Solidarity Day marches, modeled after Jacob Birnbaum's Jericho, Redemption, and Exodus marches and rallies of the 1960s. Mr. Hoenlein is now the Executive Vice Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Of great significance was the creation in 1970 of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, a coalition of non-established regional groups, under the chairmanship of Dr. Louis Rosenblum, with whom Jacob Birnbaum worked for many years.

Mr. Hoenlein has publicly stated that he considers Mr. Birnbaum "the father of the Soviet Jewry movement." Similar statements have been made by other major public figures such as Dr. Meir Rosenne, who worked closely with Mr. Birnbaum in the early formative period of 1964 to 1967. Dr. Rosenne later became Israel's Ambassador to France and then to the United States. Sir Martin Gilbert, the official British historian of Winston Churchill and his times, has made a similar statement.

In May, 1965, Mr. Birnbaum was the first person to testify before a congressional committee on the importance of utilizing economic leverage on the Kremlin to secure the liberation of Soviet Jews. When the late Senator Henry Jackson initiated the legislation which finally resulted in the passage of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in 1974, Mr. Birnbaum worked closely with the director of Senator Jackson's office, Dorothy Fosdick, and, of course, with his other aide, Richard Perle, who played a major role in the initiation and development of the legislation.

The idea of placing economic pressure on Communist states to increase emigration played a key role in softening up the Kremlin regimes to make possible the Soviet Jewry demand of "Let My People Go." For the first time, there was legislation to put teeth into the previous congressional humanitarian resolutions.

From 1976 to 1986, Jacob Birnbaum conducted annual Most Favored Nation campaigns, based on Jackson-Vanik, to pressure various countries, including Romania, to increase emigration and to release prisoners. He testified annually before both Senate and House Committees.

In the latter 1970s, Mr. Birnbaum enlarged his Soviet Jewry strategy. He expanded the slogan "Let My People Go" by adding "Let My People Know." Let them know their heritage. The Kremlin had pulverized Jewish religious, cultural and community life, and, in the 1960s, the Soviet Jewish resistance underground began to generate Jewish self-education, cultural,

religious and Hebrew-speaking groups in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Birnbaum conducted numerous campaigns for their protection, enlisting the aid of many Christian religious denominations. These efforts reached a high point when he organized and led a delegation of the Synagogue Council of America to meet with the Deputy Secretary of State and the Department's Human Rights Director, Warren Zimmermann, in September 1985.

Mr. Birnbaum's vision was partially realized with Malcolm Hoenlein's Solidarity Rallies in New York, and, finally, by the great national rally in Washington on December 7, 1987, on the eve of President Gorbachev's meeting with President Reagan.

Finally, in 1990, the Kremlin conceded to all the pressure and permitted a mass emigration, which has now totaled more than 2 million people, about 1 million to Israel and 1 million elsewhere, mostly to the United States. This was no small accomplishment. And many people played a role in making it happen.

In addition to the courageous work of Mr. Birnbaum, tribute ought to be paid to the many pioneers and the other national organizations which fought so strenuously for the liberation of Soviet Jews:

Morris Abram, U.S. Human Rights Commissioner; Dr. Moshe Deeter, the scholar whose research fueled the early movement; former Justice Arthur Goldberg; the distinguished theologian, Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Heschel; Senator Jacob Javits; NASA scientist Dr. Louis Rosenblum of the Cleveland Committee on Soviet Anti-Semitism; and Elie Wiesel, whose book, "The Jews of Silence" was so influential.

Many organizations also played an important role, and I will name them in my extended remarks.

Following the collapse of the Soviet regime, Mr. Birnbaum spent a substantial part of the 1990s in combating anti-Semitic manifestations in former Soviet Central Asia, mostly in Uzbekistan, intervening through the State Department and enlisting Malcolm Hoenlein's aid in engaging the Uzbek Ambassador in Washington.

In his 81st year, Mr. Birnbaum continues to support groups engaged in the Jewish education of former Soviet Jews and their children. His dedication to his beliefs remains as strong as ever.

For all these reasons, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives ought to honor the life and six decades of public service of Jacob Birnbaum and especially his successful commitment to freeing Soviet Jews from religious, cultural, and communal extinction. He is a true hero.

I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, for moving this resolution quickly through his committee. I would also like to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) for managing the consideration of this resolution today,

and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her leadership on this.

Again, I urge all my colleagues to join me in passing this resolution to honor this work of this unique hero of this century.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 137, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CALLING ON GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA AND LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY TO RECOMMIT TO POLITICAL SOLUTION IN NORTH-EASTERN UGANDA

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 80) calling on the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to recommit to a political solution to the conflict in northern Uganda and to recommence vital peace talks, and urging immediate and substantial support for the ongoing peace process from the United States and the international community, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 80

Whereas for over two decades, the Government of Uganda has been engaged in an armed conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) that has resulted in up to 200,000 deaths from violence and disease and the displacement of more than 1,600,000 civilians from eastern and northern Uganda;

Whereas former United Nations Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland called the crisis in northern Uganda "the biggest forgotten, neglected humanitarian emergency in the world today";

Whereas Joseph Kony, the leader of the LRA, and several of his associates have been indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including rape, murder, enslavement, sexual enslavement, and the forced recruitment of an estimated 66,000 children;

Whereas the LRA is a severe and repeat violator of human rights and has continued to attack civilians and humanitarian aid workers despite a succession of ceasefire agreements;

Whereas the Secretary of State has labeled the LRA "vicious and cult-like" and designates it as a terrorist organization under the Immigration and Nationality Act;

Whereas the 2006 Department of State report on the human rights record of the Government of Uganda found that "security